

CLAIMS

1. A process for producing, starting from a vulcanizable elastomer material, a covering that has an appearance substantially free from phenomena of directionality, comprising the operations of:

feeding an extruder with strips of vulcanizable elastomer material of different colors, subjecting said material to extrusion by causing it to pass through a drawplate provided with openings;

subjecting the material obtained by means of drawing to shredding so as to obtain, as a result of the action of shredding, a granular material;

subjecting said granular material to mixing until it is rendered substantially homogeneous;

feeding said granular material rendered homogeneous by mixing to a calender, by direct feeding by gravity of the homogeneous granular material into the gap between the rollers of the calender so as to obtain, as a result of calendering, a strip of vulcanizable elastomer material; and

subjecting said material in the form of a strip to vulcanization.

2. The process according to claim 1, comprising the operation of subjecting to storage said granular material before or after said mixing.

3. The process according to claim 1 wherein the drawplate has openings having a crescent-shaped conformation.

4. The process according to claim 3 wherein said openings have a maximum transverse dimension of between 1 mm and 5 mm.

5. The process according to claim 3 wherein said openings have a maximum transverse dimension of 2.5 mm.

6. The process according to claim 3 wherein said openings have a length in the region of 10-15 mm.

7. The process according to claim 3 wherein said crescent-shaped openings are arranged in pairs of openings facing one another with the concavity set opposed, *i.e.*, according to a general configuration ().

8. The process according to claim 7 wherein said pairs of openings are distributed according to a regular array on the development of the drawplate.

9. The process according to claim 1, comprising the operation of enabling said granular material to reach, before or after said mixing operation, room temperature.

10. The process according to Claim 1, comprising the operation of enabling an at least partial mixing of the colors of said strips of vulcanizable elastomer material fed to the extruder.

11. The process according to claim 1 wherein the rollers of said calender are kept at a temperature of substantially between 30°C and 40°C.

12. The process according to claim 1 wherein the speed of rotation of the rollers of the calender and the rate of feed by gravity of the granular material onto the rollers are regulated jointly so as to maintain a constant level of granular material waiting to be calendered.

13. An intermediate product of the process according to claim 1 wherein said intermediate product is constituted by said granular material that has been rendered substantially homogeneous.